WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of configuring computer-based communication, said method comprising:

obtaining respective user identifiers appropriate to identify a user of a computer to each of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer; and

providing on a display screen of the computer a graphical user interface associated with said computer-based communication, wherein the graphical user interface includes representations of said multiple communications applications.

2. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising, in response to user selection of a first one of the communications applications, connecting the user to the application to establish a first session, wherein the connecting includes providing a corresponding previously-obtained user identifier to the application.

3. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said obtaining user identifiers comprises receiving entry of the identifiers from the user.

4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said obtaining user identifiers comprises accessing previously-stored user identifiers.

5. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising obtaining respective passwords appropriate to allow access of the user to each of the multiple communications applications.

6. The method as recited in claim 5, wherein said obtaining passwords comprises accessing passwords previously stored on the computer.

7. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising communicating the user identifiers to an additional computer.

8. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising forming a programming object or class including the obtained user identifiers.

9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the multiple communications applications include an application selected from the group consisting of: electronic mail application, instant messaging application and internet chat application.

10. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said providing a graphical user interface comprises providing a window indicating a status of each of the multiple communications applications.

11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein said representations of multiple communications applications comprise respective icons.

12. The method as recited in claim 2, further comprising, upon receiving instructions from the user, joining the first session to a second session established by connection of the user to a second one of the communications applications.

13. The method as recited in claim 12, wherein said joining comprises immediately transferring messages received in the first session to the second session.

14. The method as recited in claim 13, wherein said joining further comprises immediately transferring messages received in the second session to the first session.

15. The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

identifying all of the communications applications accessible with the computer; and

determining a status of each of the identified communications applications.

16. The method as recited in claim 15, wherein said identifying and determining comprise determining a status of each communications port within the computer.

17. A computer system, comprising:

a display screen;

means for obtaining respective user identifiers effective to identify a user of the computer system to each of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer system; and

means for providing on the display screen a graphical user interface associated with computer-based communication, wherein the graphical user interface includes representations of the multiple communications applications.

18. The system as recited in claim 17, wherein said means for obtaining and means for providing comprise a communications aggregation program stored on a storage medium accessible by the computer system.

19. The system as recited in claim 18, wherein the communications aggregation program is adapted to access a data structure including the user identifiers.

20. The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the data structure comprises an object or class in an object-based programming approach.

21. The system as recited in claim 18, further comprising application programs stored on the storage medium, wherein the application programs correspond to the multiple communications applications.

22. The system as recited in claim 21, wherein the application programs are adapted to receive corresponding user identifiers from the communications aggregation program.

23. The system as recited in claim 22, wherein the communications aggregation program and the application programs adhere to a common application programming interface.

24. The system as recited in claim 17, further comprising means for identifying all communications applications accessible with the computer, and for determining a status of each of the identified communications applications.

25. A computer-usable carrier medium, comprising:

first program instructions executable on a computer for obtaining respective user identifiers effective to identify a user of a computer to each of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer; and

second program instructions executable on the computer for providing on a display screen of the computer a graphical user interface associated with said computer-based communication, wherein the graphical user interface includes representations of said multiple communications applications.

26. The carrier medium as recited in claim 25, wherein the first and second program instructions are within a communications aggregation program stored on the carrier medium.

27. The carrier medium as recited in claim 25, wherein the first program instructions are further executable to obtain the user identifiers by accessing a data structure.

28. The carrier medium as recited in claim 27, further comprising the data structure.

29. A computer-usable carrier medium, comprising a data structure storing a set of user identifiers effective to identify a user of a computer to each of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer.

30. The carrier medium as recited in claim 29, wherein the data structure comprises an object or class in an object-based programming approach.

31. The carrier medium as recited in claim 29, wherein the data structure further stores passwords corresponding to one or more of the user identifiers.

32. The carrier medium as recited in claim 29, wherein the data structure further stores a name referring to the user identified by the user identifiers.

33. The carrier medium as recited in claim 32, wherein the name further identifies an object or class in an object-based programming approach.

34. A computer-usable carrier medium, comprising first program instructions executable on a computer system to implement a first communications application for the computer system, wherein the first program instructions are adapted to receive, from a communications aggregation program running on the computer system, a first user

identifier identifying a user of the computer system to the first communications application.

35. The carrier medium as recited in claim 34, further comprising second program instructions executable on the computer system to implement a second communications application for the computer system, wherein the second program instructions are adapted to receive from the communications aggregation program a second user identifier identifying a user of the computer system to the second communications application.

36. The carrier medium as recited in claim 35, wherein the first and second communications applications and the communications aggregation program adhere to a common application programming interface.

37. The carrier medium as recited in claim 34, wherein the first program instructions comprise a wrapper or shell program enabling a third party communications application program to interact with the communications aggregation program.

38. A method of configuring computer-based communication, said method comprising:

obtaining respective user identifiers appropriate to identify a user of a computer to each of multiple communications applications accessible with the computer;

providing on a display screen of the computer a graphical user interface associated with said computer-based communication, wherein the graphical user interface includes representations of said multiple communications applications;

storing the obtained user identifiers in a data structure; and

communicating the user identifiers to an additional computer.

39. The method as recited in claim 38, wherein said storing comprises forming a programming object or class including the obtained user identifiers.